

CHAPTER XX
THE REBIRTH OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN

The peace suggested is a peace for the future security of the world; a peace for peoples rather than for rulers; for disarmament rather than for a continuation of militarism; a peace for the hundreds of millions of subject peoples and the small and subject nationalities which suffer most from war rather than for the outraged feelings of those who feel they must have revenge for the outlawry of the Central Powers. And it is for these ends that America is in the war. We are fighting that the world may be free from wars, free from the things that make for war. We desire that the world may be a safe place for all people to live in; to develop their own cultures and civilizations unmolested by any other Power. America made war on Germany not that we or our allies might do what we would with the subject world but that the subject world might be free from oppression by any Power. And such are the ideals of the

Russian revolutionists, of the British Labor party, of the Congress of Italian working men. Such is the ideal of the small nations and of the weak and defenseless peoples of all the earth. They desire that this war shall *end war*, not lay the mines of the next war.

An internationalized Mediterranean affords an opportunity to reawaken the traditions with which the Mediterranean is associated, to recall a splendor that has passed away with the change in trade routes, the rise of industry, and the coming of the more virile races to the north. But the possibilities of a great civilization are still there. No country has more charm, more instinct for beauty, art, science, and learning than Italy. Its development during the last two generations is fairly comparable to that of the nations of the north. It has been limited by the lack of resources and the exhaustion born of wars and preparedness for wars. Italy has no iron, no copper, no coal. There is but little timber. Much of its land is still uncultivated from lack of capital. Italy is dependent on the outside world for the material things that go to make up a modern state. She has to import food and fuel. She

must go to other countries for iron, steel, and copper. She can only build her railroads, her merchant marine, her battleships by the grace of other nations.

The great need of Italy is economic, and this need America, Great Britain, and France can extend to her.

Italy might be assisted to development by the other Powers, a development that will redound to the well-being of the rest of the world. Italy produces few articles that compete with other countries. Yet her products are needed by the world. Other nations should open their doors free from tariffs to the wealth of Italy, not only as a measure of gratitude, not only as a recognition of her traditions, but as a means of luring to our homes the art, the color, and the beauty which Italy possesses, and which her people are eager to express.

The traditions of Greece, like those of Italy, are traditions of beauty. Here, too, civilization lingered for hundreds of years. For centuries Greece has been paying the price of militarism, of the struggle for the eastern Mediterranean. She has been coveted by nations and empires. The Romans, Turks, the countries of the Balkan Peninsula have kept Greece

in a state of suspense. The country has had no chance to develop. Greece, too, needs the protection of disinterested friends to release her from fear, from the burdens of militarism, from continuous wars. She needs the raw materials which come from the hardier countries. She needs credit and the scientific and engineering aid that the more advanced nations have to offer.

The condition of Italy and Greece indicates again how narrow nationalism and mediæval ideas of protection have gnarled the world and forced people into channels at war with nature. It has made a hod-carrier of the artist. It has closed the homes of the Western world to the beauties of the Mediterranean peoples. It has forced the Italians into competition with Germany and England; it has destroyed the traditions and aspirations of peoples, and driven them to the doing of things of but little value to them at best and at terrible cost to their life as well.

This is why the peace which comes should permit the greatest possible freedom of trade among all nations. This is why the small nations should be encouraged to develop their cultures, their literature, their gifts to the

world. This Empire of the Allies should be a guardian not alone of highways and territories, it should be the promoter of civilization as well.

Farther east in western Asia there are possibilities of development. Asia Minor and Anatolia are rich with possibilities of trade, commerce, and agriculture. Farther down the Tigris and Euphrates valleys are opportunities for reclamation projects, for water-power, for mines, timber, and oil. Most important of all, millions of acres of land, potentially rich, wait only on labor, security, and the harnessing of the water-power of the rivers to reclaim this region which was long the centre of the civilization of the world. Wheat and cotton can be grown adequate for the needs of millions of people. People now living as semicivilized nomads would be given an opportunity to till these lands and to build up trade and commerce. There are 20,000,000 people in Turkey who need the guidance and organizing ability of the world to become a far greater people than they have ever been; while the Syrians, Armenians, and other Christian peoples have great aptitude along industrial lines, an aptitude now repressed by the Turks.

Finally, with the freeing of the Mediterranean from the conflict which has existed for generations, this whole territory from the Italian peninsula to Persia might easily become a centre of civilization as it was for centuries. Here the routes of trade cross one another. They go from India to the Atlantic Ocean and return. They go from South and Central Africa to Egypt and back again. From Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Balkans they run to the south, and from the Orient they run back to central Europe.

Constantinople should be one of the world's great clearing-houses. It should be a centre of trade and commerce like London and Hamburg. Here goods and wares should be exchanged. Here a free port, like those of London, Liverpool, Hamburg, Bremen, and Copenhagen, would receive and discharge cargoes. Thousands of miles of transportation would be saved if cargoes from Asia and Africa could load and unload at Constantinople and the ports of the Mediterranean. With such a development of trade, commerce, and industry this part of the world would reclaim its ancient distinction. It is only the Mercantilist ideas of the eighteenth century and the narrow pro-

tectionist policies of the twentieth century that sees in the prosperity of one country the misfortune of another. And no single thing would contribute more to the peace and prosperity of Europe than the generous development of the Mediterranean region, even though that development did end some of the monopolies and privileges which the commercial and trading classes of the several Powers now enjoy.¹

¹The placing of portions of the Mediterranean under international control has met with approval where approval was least to be expected. The British Labor party in its statement of December 28, 1917, suggested that Palestine be made "a free state, under international guarantee." With regard to Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Arabia, "if in these territories it is impracticable to leave it to the peoples to settle their own destinies the Labor party insists that, conformably with the policy of 'no annexations,' they should be placed for administration in the hands of a commission acting under the supernational authority or League of Nations," which, for the sake of the peace of the world, should also administer Constantinople, the Dardanelles, and possibly some or all of Asia Minor.

Mr. Norman Hapgood, writing as foreign correspondent of the *New York Evening Post*, July 21, and October 6, 1917, speaks of the views of "some of the best informed British statesmen" with regard to an international solution of the problem of Constantinople and the Straits, and says, "it has become not improbable that for the rest of Turkey also, including Arabia, Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Palestine, some kind of an international rule with nominal Turkish sovereignty may be the outcome." See article by Professor Emily Balch in *The New World*, February, 1918.